

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
PY 42 FUNDING–CDBG, ESG, HOME and HOPWA
PUBLIC HEARING
TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 2016
6:00 PM**

ATTENDANCE: M. Evette Brantley, Co-Chair; Nessah Smith, Scott, Burns, Aidee Nieves
Richard Salter, Sr. joined the hearing at 6:25
Alfredo Castillo joined the hearing at 6:35.

STAFF: Ginne-Rae Clay, Deputy Director OPED, City of Bridgeport
Tara Petrocelli, CDBG Administrative Coordinator
Claudia Fidalgo, Program Manager, HOPWA/ESG

OTHERS: All representatives who addressed the Committee in regard to their applications for CDBG funding. (See list of organizations and requested amounts below).

CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the public hearing to order at 6:10 PM.

She reviewed the procedures of the hearing to all those present.

Housing for Success

Mr. Diaz came forward to speak about this organization which provides transitional housing to 30 young men and women who receive intensive psychosocial assessment, intervention, treatment and other services.

Council Member Nieves asked how many social workers there are to which Mr. Diaz answered that there is one. Council Member Smith asked about the length of the program to which the answer was 2-3 years, depending on the severity of condition. The Chair asked about the success rate to which Mr. Diaz answered that clients have gone on to college and that they are followed up on with counseling.

Caribe Youth Leaders

Mr. John Torres came forward to speak about this organization which would use funding to provide sports programs in several areas. In addition, this organization provide high school youth with supporting educational programming for college prep and other program which include students 8-18.

The Chair asked whether this organization has any other funding to which the answer was that foundation provide some funding, but the major source of funding, about 40%, is from grants.

Council Member Salter, Sr. joined the hearing at 6:25.

Chemical Abuse Services Agency

Mr. Ashton came forward to speak about three projects for which his agency is applying for funding.

- Casa Hostos which is a 16-bed substance abuse treatment center that serves about 350 clients per year. Funding will be used to update windows and upgrade doors.
- Project Courage which is a women's Recovery/Treatment program that sees about 250 clients per year. Funding will be used for roofing and gutters.
- Casa HOPWA which provides safe, stable housing along with holistic behavioral health services for individuals with HIV/AIDS in the Bridgeport area. Funds will be used for the maintenance of the housing facility and well as case management services.

The Chair asked where the agency was located to which the answer was Kossuth Street. Council Member Nieves asked how many clients and Mr. Ashton answered 76-77 women with two levels of care. Council Member Salter, Sr. asked Mr. Ashton to explain. Holistic care which Mr. Ashton replied is the integrating of base needs with spiritual needs. Council Member Salter, Sr. asked if the agency prescribes medication to which the answer was in the negative and it only administers medication. Council Member Burns asked how the dollar figure for the projects were arrived at to which the answer was that two bids had been obtained, but the agency does not have enough money to put it out to bid.

Council Member Castillo joined the meeting at 6:35.

United Way of Coastal Fairfield County

Ms. Kathy Hunter came forward to speak about this organization's mission to end homelessness by using the funding to serve about 20 households in shelters, on the streets, or in other uninhabitable places. Ms. Samantha Seward spoke about emergency rental and security deposit assistance, helping with employment, working with shelters. The Chair how the agency assists the homeless to the answer was to help clients find secure jobs, provide mental health, and by partnering with other facilities. Council Member Salter, Sr. asked whether they take walk-ins to which the answer was that clients come by referral.

Recovery Network of Programs

A male representative came forward to speak about this organizations mission to provide services to individuals with addictions and said that funds will be used to upgrade windows and replace with security doors.

Inspirica

A male representative came forward to speak about this agency's mission to break cycle of homelessness for men and women who have HIV/AIDS across Fairfield County. Funds would be used for the agency's facility in Stamford.

Council Member Salter, Sr. asked about other funding to which the answer was that there is HOPWA, State and DMIS funding.

Alpha Community Services

A representative came forward to speak this agency which provides emergency shelter services 24 hours per day at two locations, in addition to a transitional living program also provided to homeless families at a different site.

- Brooks Street and Clinton Avenue sites: funds will be used for utility costs
- Jean Wallace Complex: funds will be used for a new roof and gutters

Council Member Salter, Sr. asked how big the staff was to which the representative answered that there is program director, three case workers and eight house managers. The Chair asked how the agency helps clients during the two year program to which the answer was through case management for permanent housing. The Chair asked whether the agency requested funds last year to which the answer was that \$30,000 was requested for windows. The Chair asked how big the house is to which the answer was that it has six apartments.

Ralphola Taylor Community Center

Mr. Julian Brown came forward to give an overview of the programs offered by the center. He spoke about the following applications submitted by the center:

- funding for youth programs which have provided a safe haven for youth for over fifty years
- staff expansion funding for a sports/recreation instructor and security guard

The Chair asked if Mr. Brown were the director to which the answer was in the affirmative. The Chair asked how many staff members there are now to the answer was 4 full-time and 14 part-time.

Helping Hands Outreach

A female representative came forward to speak about this agency's Street Outreach which feeds over 100 homeless individuals each week under the John Street overpass. She said the funds would be used to continue to provide this service in addition to referral services and clothing.

The Chair asked about the location of this outreach to which the representative answered that it was under the John Street bridge. Council Member Burns asked how the meals are prepared to which the answer was that it is a commercial kitchen The Rootsman Kitchen which prepares the food.

Council of Churches

Mr. Dan Broccio came forward to request funding which will be used to provide free computer and financial literacy courses for adults. Training courses are offered 10 months of the year and there are about 90 participants.

The Chair asked what church it is to which Mr. Broccio answered that it was organization called the Council of Churches on Boston Avenue. Council Member Burns asked how the participants are recruited to which Mr. Broccio answered that individuals are referrals from other agencies, in addition to his organization's outreach to the formerly incarcerated. The Chair asked if there was a bilingual staff to which the answer was that the programs are in English.

Mid-Fairfield AIDS Project

Mr. Michael Giannati came forward to speak about his program which provides rental subsidy assistance at 23 scattered housing sites to individuals and families with HIV/AIDS. He said that funds will be used for housing, case management and HIV testing.

Bridgeport YMCA

A male representative came forward to speak about the requested funding for the South End Community Center which provides a safe, positive, healthy and educational environment for over 300 children and their families. Funds will be used to continue these programs.

The Chair asked if there are bilingual services to which the representative answered that there were. Council Member Salter, Sr. asked if the programs included grades K-8 to which the answer was in the affirmative including pre-K.

The Village Initiative Project

Ms. Theresa Wilson came forward to speak about the bus tours to college campuses which this organization arranges for Bridgeport students in grade 8-12.

Council Member Burns asked about the funding request for buses and whether that included paying for hotels at far destinations. The answer was that the funding will be used only for buses. Council Member Nieves asked how the students are recruited to which the answer was by going to schools, recommendations from guidance counselors and through an open door policy.

LifeBridge Community Services

A representative came forward to speak about LifeBridge's following applications:

- funding for a training program which teaches workskills for employment opportunities
- funding to repave and remark their parking lot which is in need of repair

Roberto Clemente Condos

A female representative came forward to speak about the need for funding to replace the parking lot. The Chair asked if the unit owners are still paying mortgages to which the answer was in the affirmative. The Chair then asked if the mortgage holders are going to match the funds to which the answer was in the negative as it is not a coop. Council Member Smith asked what is included in the common charges to which the answer was that the common charges take care of outside maintenance. Council Member Smith then asked whether heat and hot water is included to which the answer was in the negative. Council Member Smith asked what the dollar amount for

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common charges is to which the answer was \$90-\$179 depending on the number of rooms. Council Member Salter, Sr. added that it is usual in this case that each unit is assessed and owners cannot afford extra charges.

Columbus Commons Condo Association

A male representative came forward to speak about the need for new siding for these condos as the existing siding is very thin, making the heating bills high. 24 families would have lower energy costs and the appearance would be improved.

The Chair asked about common charges to which the representative answered that these charges keep up the outside and the appearance of the property.

Third Stone Ridge

A male representative came forward to speaking about the requested funding which would be used for a wrought iron perimeter fence since the current fence has been cut through and repaired three or four time, leading to a decrease in safety and security for seniors and children alike.

Council Member Burns asked if this condo association works with the police to which the answer was that a block watch has been organized and lighting has been installed.

Trashbusters for the Mill Hill NRZ

Mr. Larry Kormer came forward to speak about the revitalization plan which would use requested funds for community facade improvements, housing demolition or rehab, and such things as awnings, flowers, lighting, attractive entry-ways. The revitalization plan is on Boston Avenue from Bond to Seaview to Palisades Streets.

The Chair asked if Mr. Kormer had contacted businesses to which the answer was in the affirmative. Council Member Burns asked whether the plan has been itemized or prioritized to which the answer was in the negative.

Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust for West Side NRZ

Mr. Boca Benson came forward to speak about neighborhood enhancement through the undertaking of two gateway projects on the West Side. Requested funds would be used for commercial facade improvements, trees and lighting on Wood Avenue and Fairfield Avenue from Clinton Avenue to Hancock Street.

The Chair asked if there were pictures for the Committee to look at to which the answer was in the negative.

Hollow NRZ

A female representative came forward to speak about improvements to the gateways into the Hollow. One project is the Pequonnock Street Gateway project, and the other relates to enhancements along Frank Street.

The Chair asked what projects have been worked on to which the answer was paving, sidewalks and lighting on Harral Avenue.

Children in Placement

A female representative came forward to speak about the court-appointed special advocates who train and supervise children for court appearances. She said that 100 children are supported by this program and funding would be used to strengthen and enhance services.

The Klein Memorial Auditorium Foundation

Mr. Lawrence Casey came forward to speak about After School at the Klein which is a tuition-free arts and literacy program which serves Bridgeport students from grades 7-12. Industry professionals instruct students in dance, music, acting, video production and other activities. Funds will allow additional students to participate and expand areas of instruction.

The Chair asked about a summer program to which Mr. Casey replied that there is no summer program at this time, but there is a plan for one next year. Council Member Burns asked how instructors are recruited to which Mr. Casey replied that the education director lives in Bridgeport and has professional contacts.

Sickle Cell Disease Awareness

A female representative came forward to speak about the need for continued funding to expand staffing, to provide more education, and for more testing. Funds will also allow for workshops at community agencies, schools, and NRZs.

The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport

Ms. Michelle McCabe came forward to speak about the Salt of the Earth Enterprise Kitchens project which would use church kitchens to host two culinary courses, 20 monthly workshops, and 4-8 food-based business entrepreneurs.

The Chair asked which church it is to which the answer was the United Congregational Church. The Chair asked about other funding sources to which Ms. McCabe answered that they only have the budget. Council Member Castillo asked whether the kitchen would have to be provided to which the answer was that the kitchen is already there.

The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport

A female representative came forward to speak about the Farmers' Market Collaborative which has seven markets in Bridgeport and sells \$50,000 of food during the season. It is all volunteer and increases access to healthy food.

The Chair raised a concern that nothing on the provided brochure signifies that is Bridgeport, and she wanted to know why the seal of Bridgeport is now displayed. The representative said that this can be updated and the seal displayed.

Green Village Initiative

A representative came forward to speak about this program which operates community gardens and a 1.5 acre urban farm. The representative said that funds will be used for supplies such as soil, gardening tools, educational materials, and added that this program partners with the Council of Churches and also with outreach programs.

The Chair asked about gardens in the East Side to which the representative answered there are school gardens at Dunbar and Tisdale. The Chair asked who is paying for utilities and how the program accesses the closest water to which the answer was that the City pays the utilities. Council Member Salter Sr. asked about the Reservoir Avenue site and whether there are complaints from residents to which the answer was in the negative, but that the condo is complaining about the sign.

Neighborhood Studios of Fairfield County

A representative came forward to speak about two applications for funding:

- funding which will be used to continue to provide children with special needs the opportunity to take part in an arts and literacy program
- funding which will upgrade the thermostats and the thermostat controller at the program facility which is located at 345 Ed. Washington Avenue

Council Member Smith asked how long Neighborhood Studios has been in existence to which the answer was since 1978. Council Member Burns asked about Saturday hours to which the representative answered 9:00am. to 12:00pm. Council Member Burns asked whether the representative has checked with the State about energy improvements to which the answer was in the affirmative, but that they are still paying off other improvements. Council Member Salter, Sr. asked whether the heating system would be up to code were the upgrades completed to which the representative answered that it would not be exactly up to code, but it would be functional.

McGivney Center

Mr. Terry O'Connor came forward to speak about two applications for funding:

- funding to upgrade their security system as well as their doors.

Council Member Burns asked whether they expect ongoing costs to which Mr. O'Connor answered in the affirmative, but that it would not be a lot.

- funding which will supplement the cost of providing a stimulating and enriching After School Program to 100 Bridgeport youth

Cardinal Shehan Center

A male representative came forward to speak about the funding which would be used to replace 50-year-old front and side doors.

The Chair asked if there is a security system at the Center to which the answer was in the affirmative. Council Member Castillo asked whether funding was received last year to which the representative answered in the affirmative, about \$10,000 for windows.

Boys and Girls Club

Mr. Bob Keevey came forward to speak about this organization which has been in Bridgeport since 1887 and addressed two applications for funding:

- funding which will be used to provide 300 youth at the Orcutt Boys and Girls Club with a safe, recreational, learning and personal enrichment after-school program environment
- funding which will be used for upgrades on the HVAC, plumbing and electrical systems as well as the gymnasium

The Chair asked who owns the building to which Mr. Keevey answered that it is owned by the Boys and Girls Club. The Chair also asked about how the organization receives funding, the answer to which was state and federal grants along with benefactor's donations.

Downtown Special Services

A male representative came forward to speak about the beautification of open spaces in downtown Bridgeport - in particular, Baldwin Plaza and the Broad Street Steps which be beautified through use of benches, floral baskets, etc. The representative said he contributes his own money and receives donations from the private sector community.

ABCD, Inc.

A female representative came forward to speak about two applications for funding:

- funding to provide emergency rental assistance and to provide financial assistance for housing stabilization services
- funding to provide emergency heating and utility assistance

Note: Both programs assist 500 Bridgeport residents, and both programs target the population below 30% median income

The Chair asked what kind of rental assistance is offered to which the representative answered that assistance can be back rent or first month's rent. The Chair asked if there was other funding to which the answer was in the negative.

The Chair asked if energy assistance was a federal program to which the answer was in the affirmative, however the representative said emergency energy assistance is different. Council Member Salter, Sr. stated the total amount of both projects to be \$175,000.

Downtown Cabaret Theater of Bridgeport

A male representative came forward to speak about the theater which has been in Bridgeport for 40 years and which gives free tickets for performances to Bridgeport children. He stated, City of Bridgeport

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however, that only 25% of Bridgeport children receive free tickets and he would use the funding to increase that number.

Hall Neighborhood House

A male representative came forward to speak this organization which has been in Bridgeport for 130 years and which provides community care and educational activities for Bridgeport residents from infants up to adults. He addressed six applications for funding:

- funding which will provide magnetic locks for three sets of internal lobby doors that lead to classrooms and 26 screamers for exit doors

The Chair asked about the Senior Center to which the representative answered that the funding was lost. The Chair said she would love to see the senior program continue and also an early learning program.

- funding for a security system for Around the Clock Daycare which provides child care services to 240 students.
- funding for Books in a Bag, a literacy project, which will provide children and parents with bags filled with new books and literacy activities and which will run for 50 weeks of the year
- funding which be used to provide services such as seminars, workshops, screenings, nutritious meals to seniors who attend the Ella Jackson Senior Center
- funding for Anti-Violence Youth Rally to provide 376 young people with a fun-filled educational day for students at risk and will include activities and workshops focusing on alternatives to violence

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOVED TO ADJOURN THE HEARING.**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER NIEVES SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The Chair adjourned the public hearing at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nerina Kagan
Telesco Secretarial Services

PUBLIC HEARING APPLICANT LIST**JUNE 21, 2016**

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Requested Amount</u>
GBAPP – Housing for Success	\$ 33,280
Bridgeport Caribe Youth Leaders: Caribe Youth Leaders	50,000
Chemical Abuse Services Agency – Casa Hostos	40,000
CASA Project Courage	38,850
CASA HOPWA	125,000
United Way of Fairfield County	80,000
Recovery Network of Programs: Windows	30,550
Inspirica HOPWA	196,881
Alpha Community Services: Families in Transition	60,000
Alpha Community Services: Jean Wallace Complex	40,000
Ralphola Taylor Community Center: Youth Programs	20,000
Ralphola Taylor Community Center: Staff Expansion	35,000
Helping Hands Outreach	25,000
Council of Churches: Computer and Entrepreneurial	10,000
Mid Fairfield AIDS Project	147,334
Bridgeport YMCA: South End Community Center	20,000
Village Initiative Project: College Prep	25,000
LifeBridge Community Services: WorkSkills Training	15,000
LifeBridge Community Services: Parking Lot Repave	130,221
Roberto Clemente Condo Association	103,300
Columbus Commons Condo Association	125,000
Third Stone Ridge	35,000
Trashbusters	50,000
Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust: West Side NRZ	50,000
GBAPP: Hollow NRZ	50,000
Children in Placement: Court Appt. Special Advocates	18,000
Klein Memorial: After School Program	49,770
Sickle Cell: Sickle Cell Outreach	67,593
Council of Churches: Salt of the Earth Program	76,250
Council of Churches: Farmer's Market Collaborative	74,880
Green Village Initiative Community Garden Program	26,050
Neighborhood Studios: Saturday Studios	10,000
Neighborhood Studios: Thermostat/Heating Upgrade	17,500
McGivney Center: Security System	15,000
McGivney Center: Youth Programming	15,000
Boys and Girls Club: After School Program	60,800
Boys and Girls Club: Rehabilitation Project	200,000
Downtown Special Services	30,000
ABCD Emergency Energy Assistance	75,000
ABCD Emergency Rental Assistance	100,000
Cardinal Shehan Center	36,196
Downtown Cabaret Theater	30,450
Hall Neighborhood House: Security Door System	56,165
Hall Neighborhood House: Daycare Center Security System	25,275
Hall Neighborhood House: Books in a Bag	14,936
Hall Neighborhood House: Ella Jackson Senior Center	26,282
Hall Neighborhood House: Anti-violence Rally	12,704